

DROUGHT CONDITIONS CONTINUE TO DOMINATE SUMMER CONCERNS

Special points of interest:

- *Drought is the number one story regarding plants this summer.*
- *Pine wilt and drought are destroying many plantings of established pines.*
- *1000 Cankers update on walnut*

It does not really matter whether you are a farmer, nurseryman, lawn maintenance operator, or homeowner; this summer has been and continues to be brutal on plants of all types. The crops and other plants in the southern two thirds of the state are clearly under stress and drought is taking its effect with mortality of trees, shrubs, lawn grasses, and crops.

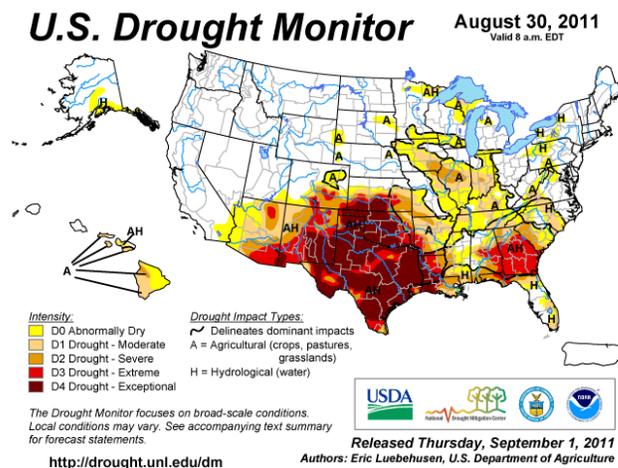
The National Weather Service drought outlook report does give some hope to Kansas with the outlook reflecting “some improvement with drought conditions in September, October, and November”.

The drought effect is mixed regarding severity of plant diseases. Foliar diseases of crops, lawns, and ornamentals are for

the most part very low. In irrigated fields, levels of foliar diseases in some instances have increased. Tree diseases such as the wilts of American elm and pines, symptoms progress very quickly under these conditions.

It is also difficult in many instances to differentiate between true disease and drought scorch and mortality.

One thing that homeowners should be aware of is that watering lawns is often not adequate for trees and shrubs. Evergreens especially should receive slow soakings and be mulched. These plants have less ability in many cases to withstand these weather conditions as deciduous plants. Kansas State Extension has many articles or blogs regarding drought and can be accessed by internet searches.



Pine Wilt Active

As one would expect, pine wilt is very active currently. Nematodes reproduce rapidly inside trees once they invade the plant after dispersal from pine sawyers in these weather conditions. Stressed trees are also more attractive to pine sawyers for oviposition. The result is that we are seeing a number of hot spots all over the eastern two thirds of the state and scat-

tered reports in other western counties.

One word of caution though in assuming that all pines dying are from pine wilt. That is not the case. Drought mortality is high especially in western Kansas where the drought has been going on for well over a year.

It is important that pines are removed whenever possible as

they will serve as sources for sawyers, bark beetles, and other pests if not removed and destroyed.

Testing is recommended for pine wilt disease in areas where the disease is not well established to ascertain the importance of sanitation.

PLANT PROTECTION AND WEED CONTROL
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INVASIVE SPECIES

Plant Protection and Weed Control Program

Plant Protection and Weed Control staff work to ensure the health of the state's native and cultivated plants by excluding or controlling destructive pests, diseases and weeds. Staff examine and analyze pest conditions in crop fields, rangelands, greenhouses and nurseries. Action taken to control potential infestations of new pests, whether they are insects, plants diseases or weeds, is beneficial to the economy and the environment.

Our Mission is to:

- Exclude or control harmful insects, plant diseases, and weeds;
- Ensure Kansas plants and plant products entering commerce are free from quarantine pests;
- Provide customers with inspection and certification services.

The Plant Disease Survey in Kansas has been conducted since 1976. The survey addresses disease situations in field crops, native ecosystems, and horticultural trade. The Kansas Department of Agriculture works cooperatively with Kansas State University and Extension programs, United States Department of Agriculture, and various commodity groups.

1000 Cankers Disease of Walnut: Update

Two additional states in the eastern half of the United States have been found to have black walnut trees infected and dying from 1000 cankers disease.

Those states are Virginia and Pennsylvania. This is in addition to Tennessee that was reported late last year and the many states to the west of Kansas including Colorado.

All three eastern states listed are considered infected under the Kansas 1000 canker disease quarantine and movement of articles into the state are strictly prohibited unless certain criteria are met.

2011 survey in Kansas has been

directed primarily to the eastern half where past surveys have been limited. So far, negative finds have been made in much of the northeast quarter of the state and in some areas of south central, northwest, and southeast. Survey observations including the past two years are now around 900 records and should reach about 1200 or so by the end of the year.

Finally, cooperative agreements for sawmills, logging companies, and firewood distributors soon will be sent out regarding handling black walnut articles imported into the state and

transiting shipments. *Images are from US Forest Service of overall tree symptoms of yellowing and thinning and then of cankers directly underneath the bark.*

